## IN THE CLAIMS:

- (Currently amended) An antimicrobial composition comprising:
- (a) about 0.1% to about 10%, by weight, of an aromatic carboxylic acid, wherein the aromatic carboxylic acid has a structure

$$(R)_n$$

wherein R, independently, is selected from the group consisting of hydroxy, C<sub>1-4</sub>alkyl, C<sub>1-4</sub>alkoxy, amino, halo, phenyl, and benzyl; and n is 1 or 2;

- (b) about 5% to about 50%, by weight, of a hydric solvent;
- (c) a sufficient amount of a pH-adjusting compound to provide a pH of about 2 to about 5.5; and
  - (d) a carrier comprising water,

wherein the aromatic carboxylic acid is the sole antimicrobial agent in the composition,

and the composition contains 0% to 0.2%, by weight, of a surfactant.

- 2. (Original) The composition of claim 1 comprising about 0.1% to about 5%, by weight, of the aromatic carboxylic acid.
- 3. (Original) The composition of claim 1 wherein the aromatic carboxylic acid has a pKa of about 2.5 to about 7.

## 4. (Cancelled)

- 5. (Currently amended) The composition of claim 1 wherein the aromatic carboxylic acid is selected from the group consisting of salicylic acid, benzoic acid, o-aminobenzoic acid, m-aminobenzoic acid, p-aminobenzoic acid, o-bromobenzoic acid, m-bromobenzoic acid, o-chlorobenzoic acid, m-chlorobenzoic acid, p-chlorobenzoic acid, 2,4-dihydroxybenzoic acid, 2,5-dihydroxybenzoic acid, 3,4-dihydroxybenzoic acid, 3,5-dihydroxybenzoic acid, ethylbenzoic acid, m-hydroxybenzoic acid, p-hydroxybenzoic acid, o-iodobenzoic acid, m-iodobenzoic acid, methyl-o-aminobenzoic acid, methyl-m-aminobenzoic acid, methyl-o-aminobenzoic acid, o-phenylbenzoic acid, isopropylbenzoic acid, and mixtures thereof
- 6. (Currently amended) The composition of claim 1 wherein the antimicrobial agent comprises salicylic acid, benzoic acid, m-hydroxybenzoic acid, p-hydroxybenzoic, o-aminobenzoic acid, m-aminobenzoic acid, p-aminobenzoic acid, or a mixture thereof.
  - 7. (Cancelled)
  - 8. (Cancelled)
- 9. (Original) The composition of claim 1 comprising about 7% to about 45%, by weight, of the hydric solvent.

10. (Original) The composition of claim 1 wherein the hydric solvent has a Hansen solubility parameter of about 18 to about 38.

- 11. (Original) The composition of claim 1 wherein the hydric solvent is selected from the group consisting of methanol, ethanol, isopropyl alcohol, n-butanol, n-propyl alcohol, ethylene glycol, propylene glycol, glycerol, diethylene glycol, dipropylene glycol, tripropylene glycol, hexylene glycol, butylene glycol, 1,2,5-hexanetriol, sorbitol, PEG-4, benzyl alcohol, and mixtures thereof.
- 12. (Original) The composition of claim 1 wherein the hydric solvent comprises dipropylene glycol, benzyl alcohol, isopropanol, ethanol, or a mixture thereof.
- 13. (Original) The composition of claim 1 wherein the pH-adjusting compound is present in an amount of about 1% to about 5%, by weight, of the composition.
- 14. (Original) The composition of claim 1 having a pH of about 2 to about 5.
- 15. (Original) The composition of claim 1 wherein the pH-adjusting compound comprises sodium phosphate, sodium dihydrogen phosphate, disodium hydrogen phosphate, sodium hydroxide, potassium hydroxide, or a mixture thereof.

16. (Previously presented) The composition of claim 1 comprising: about 0.2% to about 5%, by weight, of an aromatic carboxylic acid as the sole antimicrobial agent; (b) about 10% to about 40%, by weight, of a hydric solvent; (c) a sufficient amount of a pH-adjusting

- compound to provide a pH of about 2.25 to about 5.
- 17. (Original) A method of reducing a bacteria population on a surface comprising contacting the surface with a composition of claim 1 for 30 seconds to achieve a log reduction of at least 3 against S. aureus or a log reduction of at least 3 against E. coli.
- (Original) The method of claim 17 18. wherein the composition achieves a log reduction of at least 3 against S. aureus and a log reduction of at least 3 against E. coli.
- (Original) The method of claim 17 wherein a log reduction of at least 3 is achieved in a viral population.
- 20. (Original) The method of claim 19 wherein the viral population comprises Rhinovirus 1A, Rhinovirus 2A, Rotavirus Wa, and mixtures thereof.
- The method of claim 17 21. (Original) wherein the surface is a skin of a mammal.

- 22. (Original) A method of reducing a viral population on a surface comprising contacting the surface with a composition of claim 1 for 30 seconds to achieve a viral log reduction of at least 3.
- 23. (Original) The method of claim 22 wherein the viral population comprises Rhinovirus 1A, Rhinovirus 2A, Rotavirus Wa, and mixtures thereof.
- 24. (Original) The method of claim 22 wherein the surface is a skin of a mammal.
- 25. (New) The composition of claim 16 wherein the antimicrobial carboxylic acid comprises salicyclic acid.
- 26. (New) The composition of claim 16 wherein the hydric solvent comprises dipropylene glycol, ethanol, benzyl alcohol, isopropanol, or mixtures thereof.